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Hol-gol Coal Mine

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1. In mid-May 1952 the North Korean Ministry of Heavy Industry was operating a gold mine in the Hol-gol (126-27, 38-52) (BU-7905) and Söktal-11 (126-26, 38-52) (BU-7705) area.¹ This mine was operated by Americans before the outbreak of World War II. During this war, it was operated by the Japanese.
2. In May 1952 the mine employed 2,495 laborers, 51 office workers and 50 guards. HONG Chi-hun, aged 37, a Labor Party member and former director of a mine in Kangwon Province, was the managing director of the Hol-gol mine. A Soviet, who came to the mine in April 1952, was acting as adviser. This Soviet always wore civilian clothes, carried a Soviet-manufactured pistol, wore Soviet-manufactured rubber shoes, and wore a gold ring on a finger of his left hand. He was six feet and one inch tall.

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3. The mine was producing gold ore. The production goal for 1952 was set at three and one half tons of pure gold.² All of the gold from the mine was being transported to the USSR to pay for weapons and equipment for the North Korean army. It was shipped by truck from Hol-gol to Kumhwa-ri (126-20, 38-51) (BU-6903), and by temporary light railroad from Kumhwa-ri to Samdung (126-11, 39-00) (BU-5620) railroad station (BU-570195). From Samdung the gold was shipped to the USSR by way of P'yongyang or Wonsan by train.

Chinnamp'o Gold Refinery

4. On 25 June 1952 there was a gold refinery at 210 Chisan-dong in Chinnamp'o City (125-24, 38-44) (YC-0989). This plant was engaged in refining gold which had been mined in Hwanghae Province. The plant employed 280 men and 150 women, who were conscripted for a 6-month period and paid an average of 160 North Korean won per day. The manager of the plant was KIM Mun-hwang (6855/2429/1854), and his assistant was SONG Cha-yol (1345/1311/3525). The refinery processed about 10 tons of gold ore daily.

Unhung-dong Coal Mine

5. On 15 August 1952 there was a coal mine at Unhung-dong (125-23, 39-36) (YD-0586), operated by 400 male miners who were working in three shifts and producing 25 tons of coal daily. The manager of the mine was KIM Hwa-chip (6855/0735/7162), and the assistant manager was O Yong-kun (0702/3144/2704).

Monazite Mining in Sinch'on County

6. On 1 August 1952, monazite was being mined in the area between Kangch'ón-dong (125-23, 38-27) (YC-0858) and Nae-dong (125-30, 38-27) (YC-1858). Conscribed laborers have been working an 8-hour day in this area from May 1947 to August 1952. These laborers were conscripted for a 6-month period, and were then relieved by a similar group. During the period mentioned, approximately 7,000 laborers have produced an estimated 25,000 tons of monazite. Of this amount, about one-third has been shipped by truck to various places in the USSR. The remainder was piled throughout the mining area.

7. Production was halted during the first 2 months of the Korean conflict, but was started again in September 1950. On 1 August 1952 production was halted again, and 16 trucks began to haul the stockpiled monazite to Sinhwang'o-ri (125-36, 38-28) (YC-2760), where it was being loaded aboard boats for shipment to Sinuiju by way of Chinnamp'o. In Sinuiju it was to be transhipped to the USSR by way of Manchuria. An estimated 200 North Korean soldiers were assigned to the mining area as security troops.

Sökch'ong-ni Monazite Mine

8. On 7 August 1952 there was a monazite mine at Sökch'ong-ni (125-17, 38-22) (XC-9949). Mining operations were spread over an area of 520,000 p'yong.³ The mine was producing 3 to 4 tons of monazite daily. There were 380 men and 140 women, most of whom had been mobilized from North and South Hamgyöng Provinces. Three Chinese Communists were acting as advisers at the mine.

Zinc Stockpile and Shipment

9. On 6 July 1952 nearly 100,000 sacks of zinc ore were piled up in the area of a railroad tunnel near the Puktae-ch'ón River in a spot at approximately

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128-53, 40-40 (DA-915033). An estimated 3,000 North Korean Labor Party members and Communists were employed there every night from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. transporting the ore to the railroad station at Tongnam.⁴ Here the ore was loaded onto 25 freight cars, which were pulled to the Tanch'ón railroad station⁵ by 2 locomotives. At Tanch'ón the cars were switched to the tracks of the Hamgyong main line for further transportation northward to an unknown destination.

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2.  Comment. Gold ore is undoubtedly intended.

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3.  Comment. There are 1,200 p'yōng in one acre.

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4.  Comment. Tongnam is unlocated, but possibly Tongam-ni at approximately 128-56, 40-38 (DV-9599) is intended.

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5.  Comment.  no coordinates for Tanch'ón railroad station, but probably the Tanch'ón railroad station at 128-54, 40-27 (DV-9277) is intended.

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